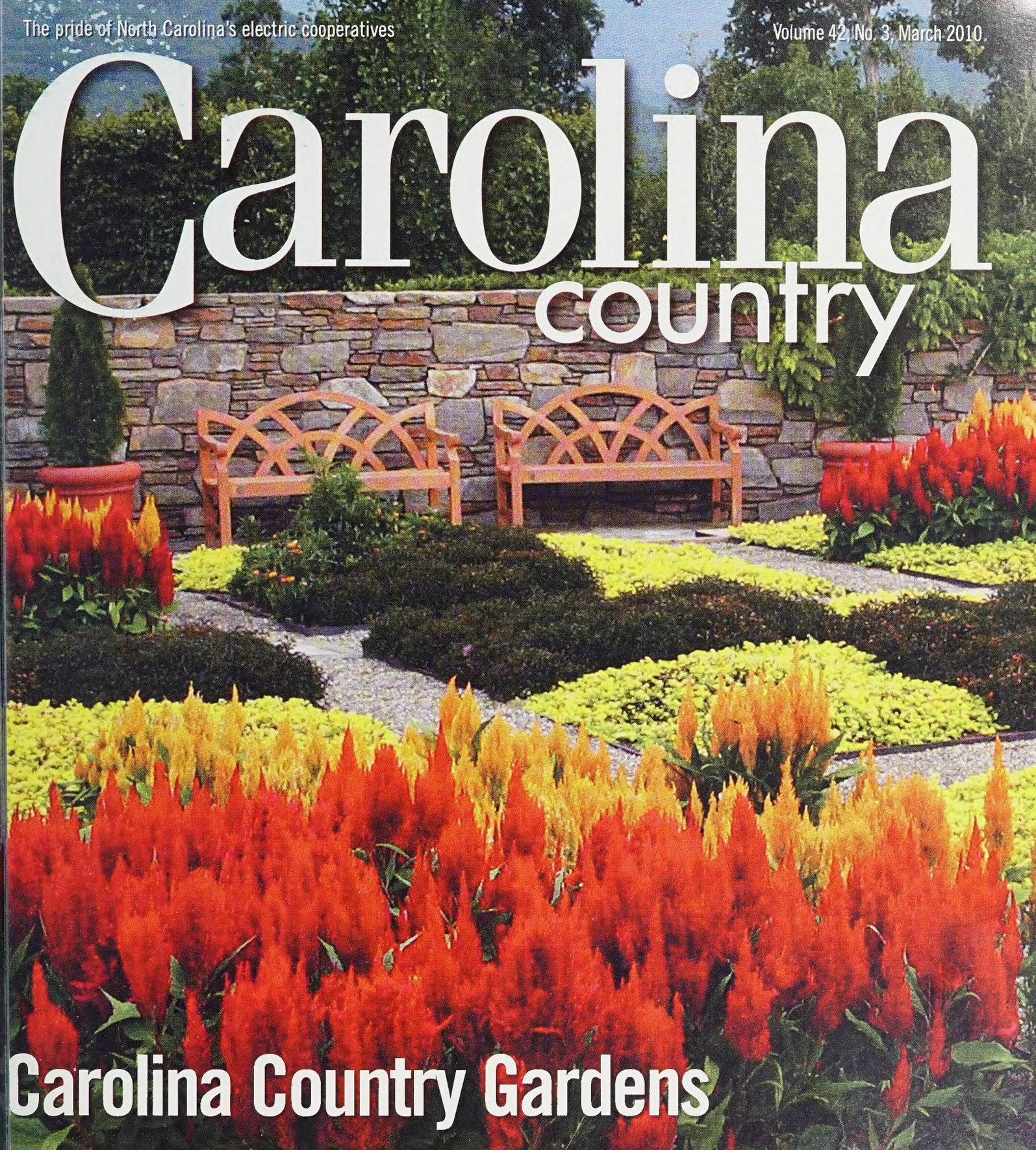
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 42, No. 3, March 2010

Carolina country



Carolina Country Gardens

INSIDE THIS MONTH:

- Rain gardens
- Quilt gardens
- Energy efficiency landscaping

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

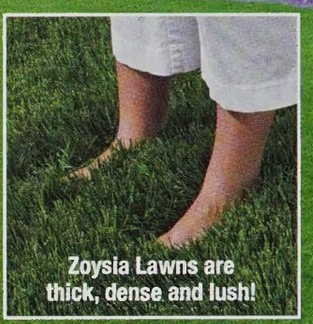
Get rebates on new appliances Earth Day weekend—page 10

SAVE When You Grow A Zoysia Lawn From Plugs!

From Plugs

To A Fabulous Lawn

ZOYSIA FARM NURSERIES
Improving America's Lawns Since 1953



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Stop wasting money, time and work sowing new grass seed each spring, only to see birds eat the seed – or rain wash it away – before it can root. Plant a genuine Amazoy™ Zoysia lawn from our living Plugs only once... and never plant a new lawn again!

Zoysia Grows Where Other Grass Doesn't!

Zoysia is the perfect choice for hard-to-cover spots, areas that are play-worn or have partial shade, and for stopping erosion on slopes. North, South, East, West – Zoysia will grow in *any* soil, no ifs, ands or buts!

Each Zoysia Plug You Plant In Your Soil Is GUARANTEED TO GROW Within 45 Days Or We'll Replace It FREE!

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No more pulling out weeds by hand or weeds sprouting up all over your lawn. Zoysia Plugs spread into a dense, plush, deep-rooted, established lawn that drives out unwanted growth and stops crabgrass and summer weeds from germinating.

Environmentally Friendly, No Chemicals Needed!

No weeding means no chemicals. You'll never have to spray poisonous pesticides and weed killers again! Zoysia lawns are safer for the environment, as well as for family and pets!

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Stays Green In Summer Through Heat & Drought!

When ordinary lawns brown up in summer heat and drought, your Zoysia lawn stays green and beautiful. The hotter it gets, the better it grows. *Zoysia thrives in blistering heat (120°)*, yet it won't winter-kill to 30° below zero. It only goes off its green color after killing frosts, but color returns with consistent spring warmth. Zoysia is the perfect choice for water restrictions and drought areas!

Our Customers Love Their Zoysia Lawns!

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❑ 4 Basic Packs + 2 FREE	400	200	Free Step-on Plugger	*$ 62.65*	$35.80	$ 7.50	40%
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March 2010
Volume 42, No. 3

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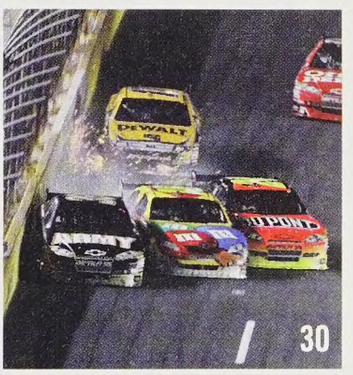

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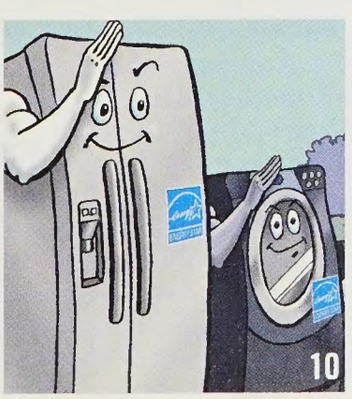
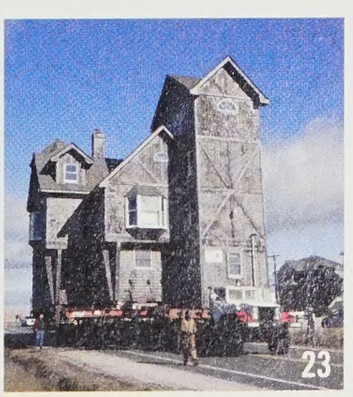
The state's largest quilt garden can be seen in seasonal display at the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville. To learn about quilt gardens, see page 12.





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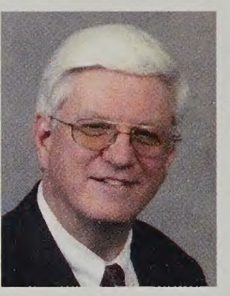
New regulations will affect your electric bill



By H. Wayne Wilkins

Before long, the electric utility industry will no longer do business as usual. In the Southeast, we are facing a steady growth in demand for electricity at the same time that it is becoming more difficult and expensive to produce and transmit that power. Until now, we relied primarily on fossil fuel and nuclear energy-fueled power plants to meet growing new demand with proven technology, but looming federal regulations on carbon dioxide emissions may change that. The cost of complying with new regulations could make electricity less affordable for everyone.

Federal regulations on emissions of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas blamed as a principal cause of climate change, are quickly becoming a reality. It's just a matter of which government branch gets there first: legislative, executive—or both.

In December the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), part of the executive branch, declared that six key greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are endangering public health and welfare. Emissions from motor vehicles of four of those greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, are also said to contribute to dangerous air pollution under this "endangerment finding." This declaration gives EPA a "foot in the door" to promulgate new regulations that could impose strict limits on carbon emissions from power plants, which would drive up electric bills.

The concern is that with carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles falling under federal Clean Air Act regulation, other emitters of carbon dioxide—fossil fuel-fired power plants included—may also soon be subject to EPA oversight.

Electric co-ops believe that any controls on carbon dioxide should be established by Congress, where the impact of these proposals can have a full public debate. So far, the climate change bills passed by the U.S. House and another one proposed by the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee include unachievable goals and timelines for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. They also include inadequate technology development incentives, and no guarantee that electric bills will remain affordable.

Senate leaders have admitted that climate change legislation has stalled and will likely be picked up sometime in the spring. This legislative logjam makes it all the more important for co-ops and consumers to pay careful attention to EPA's current efforts.

Any climate change legislation should protect consumers and preempt use of the federal Clean Air Act and any other existing laws. Otherwise, utilities and businesses could be burdened with the task of trying to comply with more than one set of regulations.

Electric cooperatives are staying engaged in this process so we can have an impact on the outcome. We want to ensure that any climate change policy goals adopted are fair, affordable and achievable. To make your voice heard in this debate, join the "Our Energy, Our Future" grassroots awareness campaign at www.ourenergy.coop. To date, more than 600,000 of your fellow co-op consumers across the country have already done so.

Wayne Wilkins is CEO of the EnergyUnited electric cooperative, the third largest supplier of residential electricity in the state. EnergyUnited serves more than 120,000 member electricity accounts in 19 Piedmont counties and also offers propane and other energy-related services through its subsidiaries. Mr. Wilkins also chairs the electric cooperatives' statewide political action group, Rural Electric Action Program.

Jam cake goes to Colorado

I love the story the 88-year-old man wrote about his beloved wife's jam cake. It touched me deeply, because I called my grandmother in Tennessee "Maw Maw." I was searching for a jam cake recipe when I came upon the story on your Web site. I own a 10-bedroom bed-and-breakfast in Pueblo, Colo., but was born in Tennessee and have lived in North Carolina, where my dad was born.

Pamela Nelson, Pueblo, Colo.

Editor's Note:

Along with many other recipes, the jam cake recipe and story, as told by Raymond T. Williams of Morganton, is on our Web site. It tells how his granddaughter surprised everyone at Christmas by making the cake that his late wife of 58 years, known as Maw Maw, used to make. Here's the recipe:

Maw-Maw's Jam Cake

Cake

- ½ pound butter
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 2 cups sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 4 whole eggs
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 cups blackberry jam

Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs and yolks; beat until light. Sift flour with dry ingredients. Add flour mixture alternately with buttermilk; add jam. Bake in 3 greased and floured 8-inch pans for 35 minutes at 350 degrees.

Icing

- 2 egg whites
- ½ pound butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup evaporated milk

Cook butter, sugar and milk to soft ball stage; pour slowly over stiffly beaten egg whites. Spread between layers and over cake.

Your Gardens

We thought you might enjoy seeing a picture of our special tomato. It's strange how it turned out. We decided it looked a little bit like a bull. What do you think?

Mike, Gail, Will Huffaker
Oxford, Wake Electric

Our granddaughter Kaleigh Jo enjoys helping in the garden. She was helping harvest potatoes in her Paw Paw's garden. Country girls love the dirt.

Lloyd & Vickie Hatley
Hudson, Blue Ridge EMC

My great-grandson Dalton Wade Moser is picking up potatoes in the family garden. Dalton is the son of Kenneth and Michelle Moser of Louisburg, members of Wake Electric in Wake Forest.

Jack & Roxie Cash

Below, two of our grandchildren, Hannah and Luke Newell, are helping in the garden. Luke never tires of the garden, just like his Pa Harold Ponds.

Carolyn Ponds, Peachland

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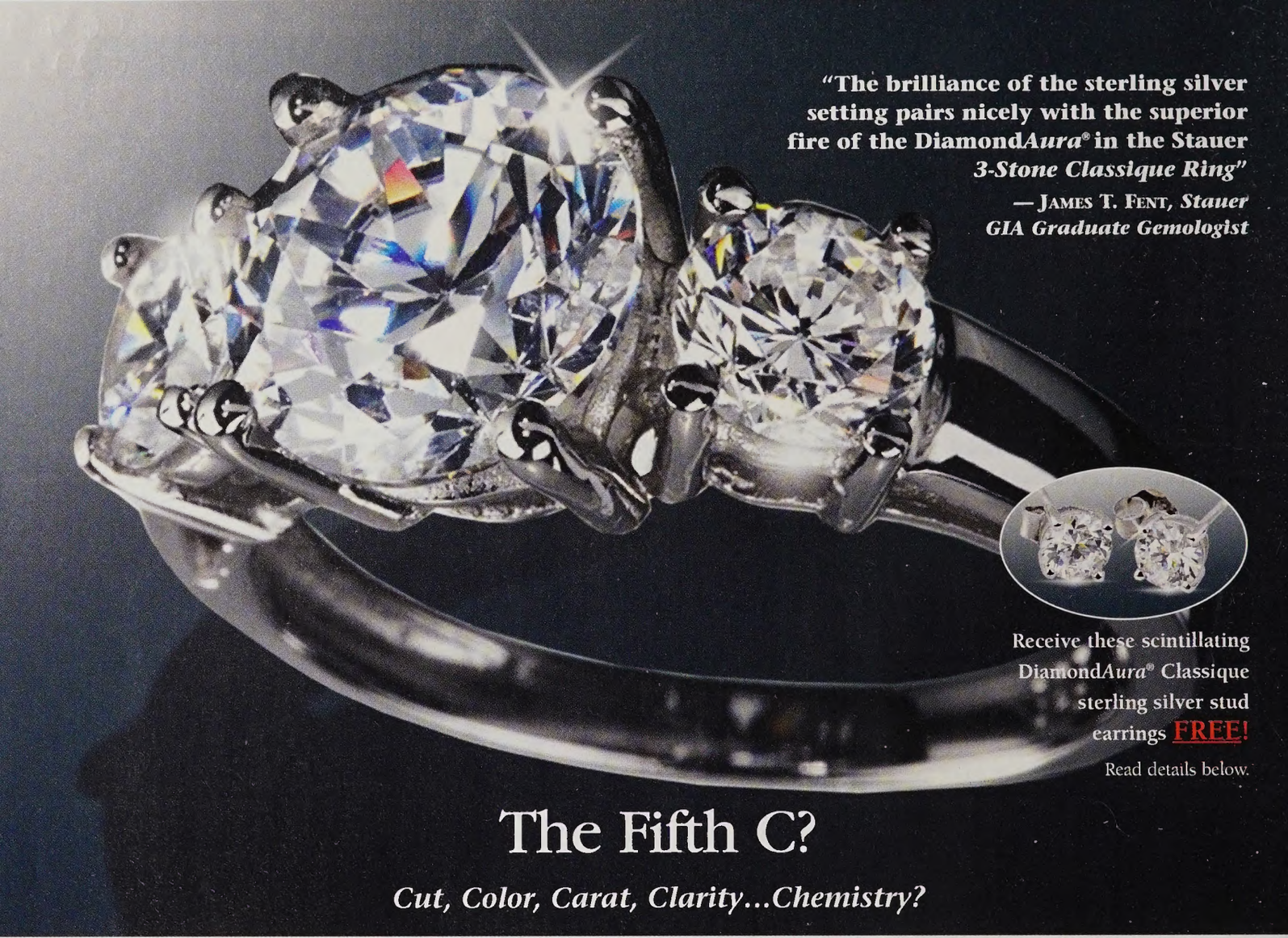

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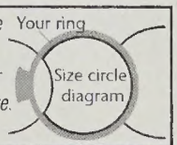
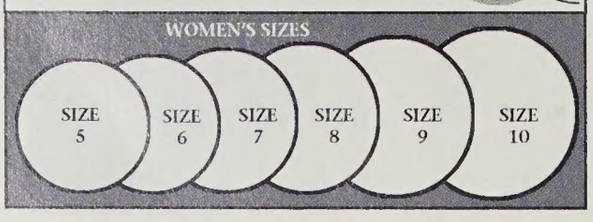
Place one of your own rings on top of one of the circle diagrams. Your ring size is the circle that matches the inside diameter of your ring. If your ring falls between sizes, order the next larger size.





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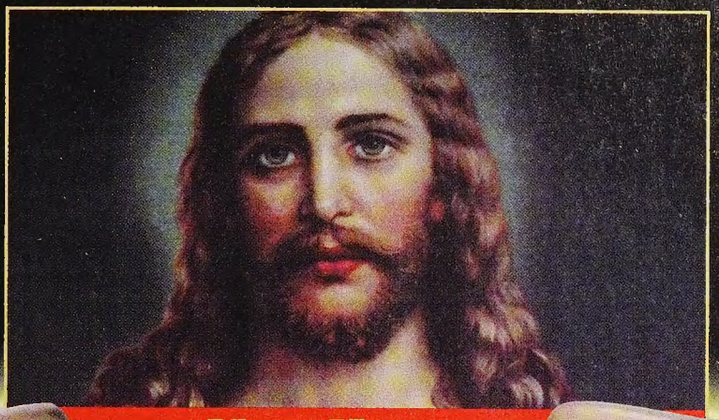

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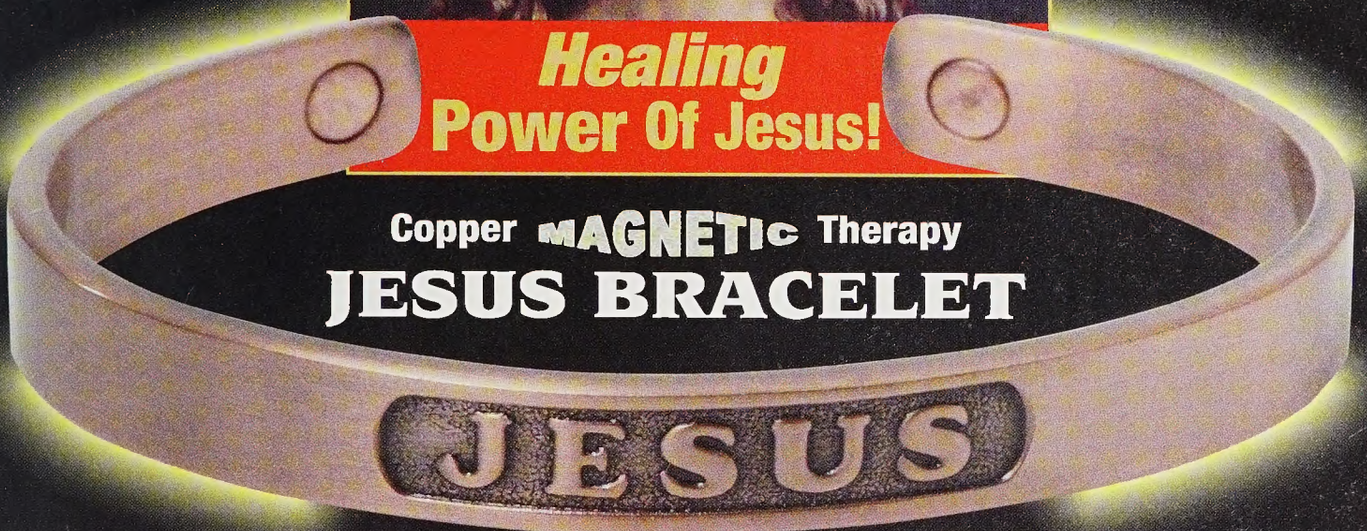

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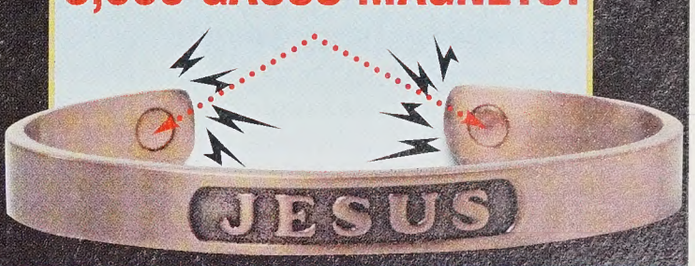

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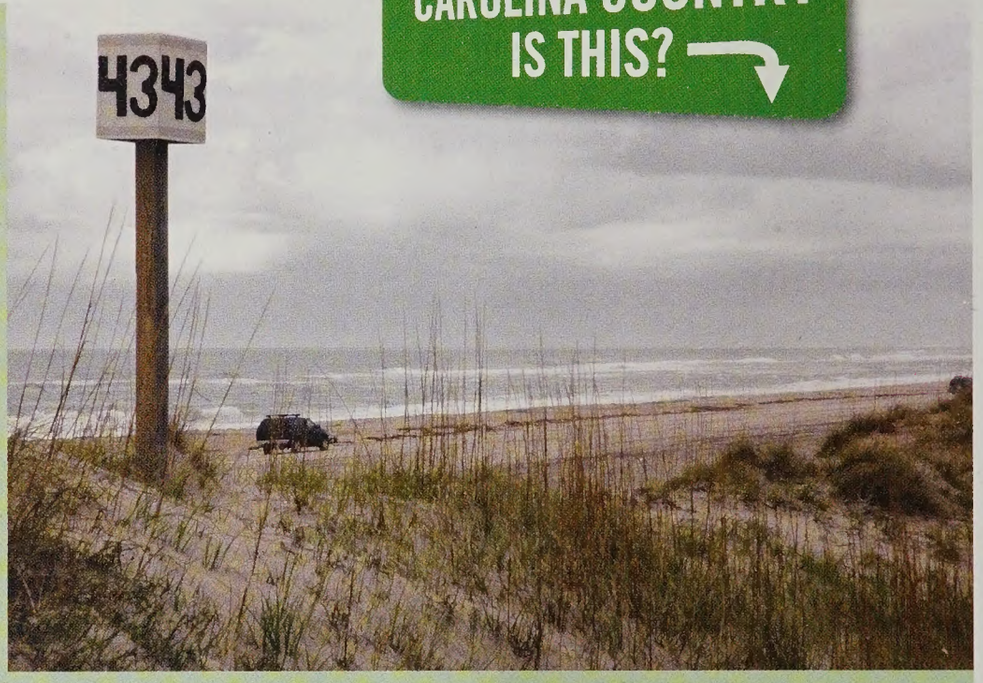
WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS?

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by March 8 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our April issue, will receive $25.



February winner

The February photo showed the former Wholesale Kennel Supply building on Stockyard Rd. near Siler City, Chatham County. Recently it has been repainted in these colors. Nearby is the Carolina Stockyard, where livestock auctions are held. The $25 winner chosen at random from all the correct ones was Michael Teague of Snow Camp, a member of Randolph EMC.

Co-ops gain from Buncombe County solar electric project

GreenCo Solutions, a not-for-profit formed by the majority of the state's electric cooperatives, will purchase all the Renewable Energy Certificates generated by a solar energy project located in Buncombe County on the roof of CPU2, a product fulfillment company.

CPU2's 224-kilowatt photovoltaic (PV) array, installed by Chapel Hill's Solar Tech South, went live in December 2009. The PV system is producing electricity from roof-mounted solar panels.

Under a 20-year purchase agreement, GreenCo Solutions will purchase all RECs for its 23 electric cooperative members. The electric cooperatives will use the RECs for compliance with the state's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS). State law requires co-ops beginning this year to acquire 0.02 percent of its energy portfolio from solar energy, a requirement that increases to 0.20 percent by 2018. The Buncombe County solar project is one in a number of renewable energy projects in the electric cooperatives' portfolio.

The PV system will provide a substantial portion of CPU2's electric power needs. Company president Jeff Baker said: "Supporting solar energy is consistent with our company's vision to show leadership in areas such as energy use. It will also help us defray rising energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

"North Carolina's electric cooperatives are committed to furthering the development of renewable energy," said Tim Bennett, vice president of business operations for GreenCo Solutions. "This partnership with CPU2 and Solar Tech South will increase the production of solar energy in North Carolina and help the electric cooperatives to meet the solar requirements of the state's REPS."

GreenCo Solutions is a member-owned, not-for-profit organization created in 2008 to help the state's electric cooperatives meet their renewable energy and energy efficiency goals and comply with the state's REPS.

The solar array located on the roof of CPU2's Buncombe County headquarters is expected to generate nearly 300,000 kilowatt-hours of power annually, enough to power 32 average-sized homes, offsetting a substantial portion of the company's electric power needs.

CPU2 is a nationally recognized leader in the field of product fulfillment and customer care services, with approximately 400 employees at its Arden plant.

Solar Tech South provides photovoltaic and thermal solar energy systems for residential and commercial applications.

Try This!

Q: Aren't you missing the boat by not educating people about LED lighting? They can save 78 percent of the energy used for conventional light bulbs. The technology developed by CREE in Durham is on the leading edge.

Bob Walters
Member of Carteret-Craven and Blue Ridge electric cooperatives

A: Light emitting diodes (LEDs) are being hailed as the next great innovation in lighting, promising long life, great light quality and super efficiency. However, the ultimate promise of LED technology has yet to be reflected in the current reality.

The Cooperative Research Network, an arm of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, partnered with several electric cooperatives throughout the U.S. to test a variety of LED lamps as alternatives to conventional lighting and CFLs. CRN and many electric co-ops are cautiously optimistic about LED technology because of the following benefits:

- LEDs last longer, perhaps for decades
- The energy to use LEDs could be substantially less than that of CFLs or other fluorescents
- With no mercury content, LEDs are more environmentally friendly
- The products are rugged and more resistant to breakage
- LEDs perform well in cold climates, especially outdoor applications
- LEDs can be dimmed and produce a more pleasing light

However, as promising as the technology appears, CRN says the path to seeing store shelves stocked with reliable and affordable LEDs may be a long one. Obstacles such as limited light output and high initial prices are barriers to widespread LED use. In the current economy, CRN says, research indicates consumers will not purchase LED lighting until manufacturers bring down costs significantly.

GE's 7-Watt Energy Smart PAR20 LED, created for use in restaurants and other commercial settings, cuts energy use by 77 percent—but typically costs more than $30.

The cost of an LED

LEDs are perceived as expensive. Indeed, an initial investment in an LED fixture today is far greater than for an incandescent bulb—sometimes as much as 100 times more expensive when compared to an Edison light 100-watt bulb priced at $1. However, the cost of running the light encompasses the total cost of ownership over its lifetime.

When LEDs are perfected, it should take about 50 incandescent bulbs, or eight to 10 CFLs, to equal the life of one LED lamp. LEDs also are expected to be about 20 times more efficient than an incandescent bulb. So when you compare the lifecycle cost of a light source, the question is: which would you rather pay—$550 to use an incandescent bulb, or $154 to use an LED?

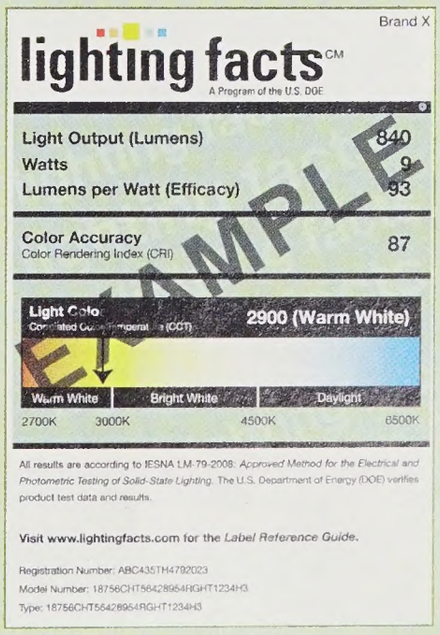
Look for the SSL quality label

Poor quality LED products are flooding the marketplace through big box retailers. Many products promising to be "good for the planet" are not as environmentally friendly as claimed. Several of these products are manufactured outside of the U.S. with components that produce low light levels, don't stand up on long service life, or have exaggerated energy saving claims.

Two positive indicators are price and the presence of an SSL Quality Advocate label. With LED lamps, you get what you pay for. A product that costs $15 is likely to provide less light and have a shorter life than one that costs $50. Even high-quality LED lamps are in a relatively early stage of development and few have undergone rigorous testing in real-life settings.

The Department of Energy is working to establish Energy Star standards around LEDs. Until this happens, DOE also asks consumers to look for the SSL Quality Advocate label, similar to the one used by the FDA for food labeling.

—Cooperative Research Network



Cooperative Research Network

Sample of what a SSL Quality Advocate label looks like.

Can you help others save energy?

Send your conservation ideas or questions to us:
P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611, or E-mail: editor@carolinacountry.com

Editor's note: Information about CREE's new 75-watt equivalent LED light can be seen at www.cree.com.

Bring 'em on!

Replace your appliances, get a rebate

Illustration by Jackie Pittman

The North Carolina Energy Office has issued the following guide to how you can earn a rebate on certain major appliances exchanged for energy-efficient appliances April 22–25. Check with your electric cooperative for special promotions they may offer as well.

When will the rebates be offered?

Rebate offers will be over a four-day period during Earth Day weekend—Thursday, April 22 through Sunday, April 25.

How much will the rebates be?

Rebates will be 15 percent on Energy Star-rated appliances. The rebates will be in addition to any store, manufacturer or other discounts being offered.

What appliances qualify?

Qualified Energy Star clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators and freezers.

Who is eligible to purchase items?

North Carolina residents who are replacing older clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators and freezers are eligible for the rebates on designated Energy Star appliances. The program is only available to those replacing appliances. Those purchasing multiple appliances or appliances for commercial properties are not eligible.

Where can I buy the appliances?

The N.C. Energy Office is working with the N.C. Retail Merchants Association and expects major retail chains as well as most independent appliance dealers to participate in the rebate program.

Can I receive more than one appliance rebate?

You may receive rebates on more than one appliance, but it must be for different appliances. For example, you may receive rebates on a refrigerator and clothes washing machine, but not on two refrigerators.

Will rebates be issued on appliances purchased before April 22, 2010?

No, the program is not retroactive.

How much energy will be saved?

By replacing older, conventional appliances with the 49,960 Energy Star items it is estimated will be purchased in the program, enough electricity will be saved to power 536 homes for a year. Natural gas savings would serve 390 homes for a year. The energy savings can be significant. For example, a new Energy Star-rated refrigerator uses half the electricity that the same size refrigerator built before 1995 uses.

Will there be rebates on any other Energy Star appliances?

Depending on the funds available, a second phase in June will offer rebates on Energy Star residential gas storage water heaters, tankless gas water heaters, central air conditioners, heat pumps and gas furnaces that replace older items. These rebates will be mail-ins and can be used with purchase through retailers, contractors or programs offered through utilities.

Where is the money coming from to pay for the rebates?

North Carolina is receiving $8.8 million in federal funds to help homeowners purchase energy-efficient appliances. The funds are part of nearly $300 million from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act being distributed nationwide by the U.S. Department of Energy.

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Quilt Gardens

A traditional and creative way of planting gardens is making a comeback

By Carla Burgess

Like quilting with fabric, incorporating geometric shapes and patterns into gardens is an old art form, but it's gaining popularity and becoming more visible in the American countryside and in home gardens. The North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville provides perhaps the biggest and best local display of a quilt garden, using plants to bring traditional quilt patterns to life. Grand in scale, the in-ground exhibit is a 6-by-4-square quilt containing 24 blocks—each of them 16 square feet. The blocks are packed with plants with brightly colored blooms and foliage, carefully arranged to represent a single quilt pattern. Gravel footpaths divide the squares for closeup viewing, and an observation area allows visitors to see the quilt from above.

The plants change with the season but stay faithful to the same pattern. In spring, some 3,500 pansies adorn the quilt. In fall, 600 chrysanthemums steal the show. The quilt gets a fresh look in March, May and September, says designer Clara Curtis, the arboretum's director of design and exhibit assets. The arboretum introduced its living quilt in 1996 with a traditional bowtie pattern. Since then, Curtis has reworked the pattern every two years into grandmother's fan, double wedding ring, log cabin, kaleidoscope and flower basket. This spring's circle-within-circle quilt is pink, black and white, featuring *Nemesia foetans* 'White Poetry'™ and *Viola cornuta* 'Black Delight', 'Orchid Frost' and 'Rose Blotch' from the Penny Series.

The quilting begins in the greenhouse, where the seeds for each year's gardens are sown. "Our greenhouse produces the plants for 95 percent of our seasonal exhibits," says Curtis. Plants are grown from seed or small plugs to keep the quilt affordable. The quilts contain primarily annual bedding plants. Perennials are often too expensive to be practical. To lengthen the life and beauty of the spring and fall quilts, Curtis chooses plants that can withstand light frost. Alyssum and violas are nice choices for the early show. Leafy veggies such as kale, turnips and Swiss chard remain appealing in late fall.

While few gardeners have the time, space, money or energy to design and plant a large quilt garden, home gardeners can easily adapt patterns to match their resources. A single block could be represented in a large, square bed, and short-statured or miniature plants work well in containers.

The Quilt Garden at the N.C. Arboretum in Asheville is an interpretation of traditional quilt block patterns using plants, which ties gardening to the art of quilting in the Southern Appalachians.

TIPS FOR GARDEN QUILTERS:

- Start your quilt on graph paper, sketching the pattern and deciding plant placement.
- Look for free quilt block templates online.
- Choose patterns with a linear design or soft angles. Log Cabin is a good beginner's pattern.
- Select plants that don't vine or spread to help the quilt keep its shape. Look for repeat-bloomers that don't need deadheading. Avoid plants that aggressively self-sow. Marigolds, pansies, begonias, impatiens (New Guinea or sun-tolerant ones for sunny sites) and coleus are good choices.
- Choose plants that will grow at about the same rate and be about the same height at maturity. Also, look for plants with the same watering requirements.
- Use stakes and string, paint, garden hoses or other markers to delineate the planting area.
- Allow proper spacing between plants when you put them in the ground.
- Take advantage of a planting site on a slight slope so you can appreciate it fully.
- Play with location—colorful shade-lovers can provide a splash for shady sites.
- Be creative—consider a lettuce quilt for your vegetable patch or a miniature quilt made of dwarf plants for a container. Sedums or low-growing grasses can provide color and texture.
- Look beyond flowers and foliage for a unique touch—ornamental peppers are popular in the arboretum's fall garden.
- Keep your budget in mind. With advance planning, you can start many of your plants from seed.

Thanks to Clara Curtis, garden designer Gail Janssen (www.essenhaus.com) and Jane Hogue of www.prairiepedlar.com, a nursery owner and avid quilt gardener, for their advice.

Rain garden at the N.C. Aquarium in Manteo

Rain Gardens

They put stormwater runoff to work and help to improve water quality

By Carla Burgess

A rain garden is a way to treat water on your property as an asset rather than diverting all of it somewhere else. Rain gardens are popular among urban planners because they not only slow the flow of runoff into storm drains, rivers and lakes, but also function as traps for retaining and often neutralizing pollution in runoff. Rain gardens also help recharge groundwater in residential and community wells and aquifers.

A rain garden isn't a pond or wetland—it's not meant for cattails and water lilies. A properly constructed one holds water no more than a couple of days, just long enough for water to soak slowly into the ground. Plants in rain gardens must be versatile, able to tolerate temporary inundation as well as brief periods of dry weather. A thoughtfully designed rain garden should draw attention to its beauty, not its function. It can be a bed or border, any shape or size. A wide variety of grasses, shrubs, trees and flowering plants will thrive in rain gardens.

You don't have to hire an engineer to plan a rain garden, but you do need to evaluate and understand where and how water flows across your property. It's helpful to survey and observe your property during and after a storm. Ideally, you'll build a garden sized to capture most or all of the runoff you have—hard surfaces such as roofs and paved sidewalks and driveways are major sources. Any size garden, however, is beneficial, but you still need to plan the size before you start digging. The handy reference chart at this Web site will help you calculate your runoff amount and decide on garden dimensions: www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/raingarden/sizing.htm.

Depending on the size garden you're building and how many extra hands are about, you could construct a rain garden in as little as an afternoon. Most gardens need be only 3 to 6 inches deep. To avoid compacting the soil, use the least destructive tools necessary to excavate. Shovels or tillers may suffice to create the desired saucer-shaped depression. On slopes, you'll need to create a slight berm to help retain water, but don't make it so substantial that it turns your garden into a sediment trap or puddle.

It's best to use plants from containers or fairly mature bare-root plants, rather than sowing seed directly. This will lessen competition with weeds and create a lower-stress environment to become established. Plant as you would any other garden, keeping the plant's crown level with the soil surface. Top with about 2 to 4 inches of organic, heavy hardwood mulch (pine straw or bark may wash away too quickly). Don't pile or spread mulch around the bases of plants. Water well and regularly until roots are well established. (See Rain Gardening Resources for suggestions of appropriate plants.)

Once built, a rain garden can be a low-maintenance garden, but it's not a no-maintenance garden. Rain gardens need to be mulched regularly to hold soil in place and provide a continual source of organic material. The garden may also need periodic weeding to keep it from becoming overgrown. Supplemental watering may be necessary during the establishment stage and sustained droughts. A few stepping stones for access will help you avoid trampling and compacting soil.

RAIN GARDEN MUSTS:

- Choose a site that is at least 2 feet from the high-water table. If the soil surface in the garden is near the water table, a wetland garden is more appropriate.
- Locate the garden at least 10 feet from a house foundation and at least 25 feet from a septic system field or wellhead.
- Determine the location of underground utility lines to avoid disturbing them.
- Ensure that rain gardens won't direct any water toward a building.

RAIN GARDENING RESOURCES

- The N.C. Cooperative Extension has an online clearinghouse of information on rain gardens, including instructions for design and planting, lists of plant species appropriate for Piedmont, mountain and coastal plain regions, suggestions of plants for both sunny and shady gardens, sample design templates, and construction photos. Visit www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/raingarden/material.htm. Find more sample designs at www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/raingarden_design/templates.htm.
- In "Rain Gardening in the South" (April 2009), authors Helen Kraus and Anne Spafford, professors of horticultural science at N.C. State University, describe their own experiences designing and building rain gardens. The book contains color photos, a few sample designs and a 20-page reference section of suggested plant species. Available from Eno Publishers (www.enopublishers.org).
- Many public gardens, municipalities and educational facilities have built rain gardens to handle their own runoff and to educate and inspire gardeners. To find demonstration gardens in your area, check with your local extension office.

RAIN GARDEN DESIGN

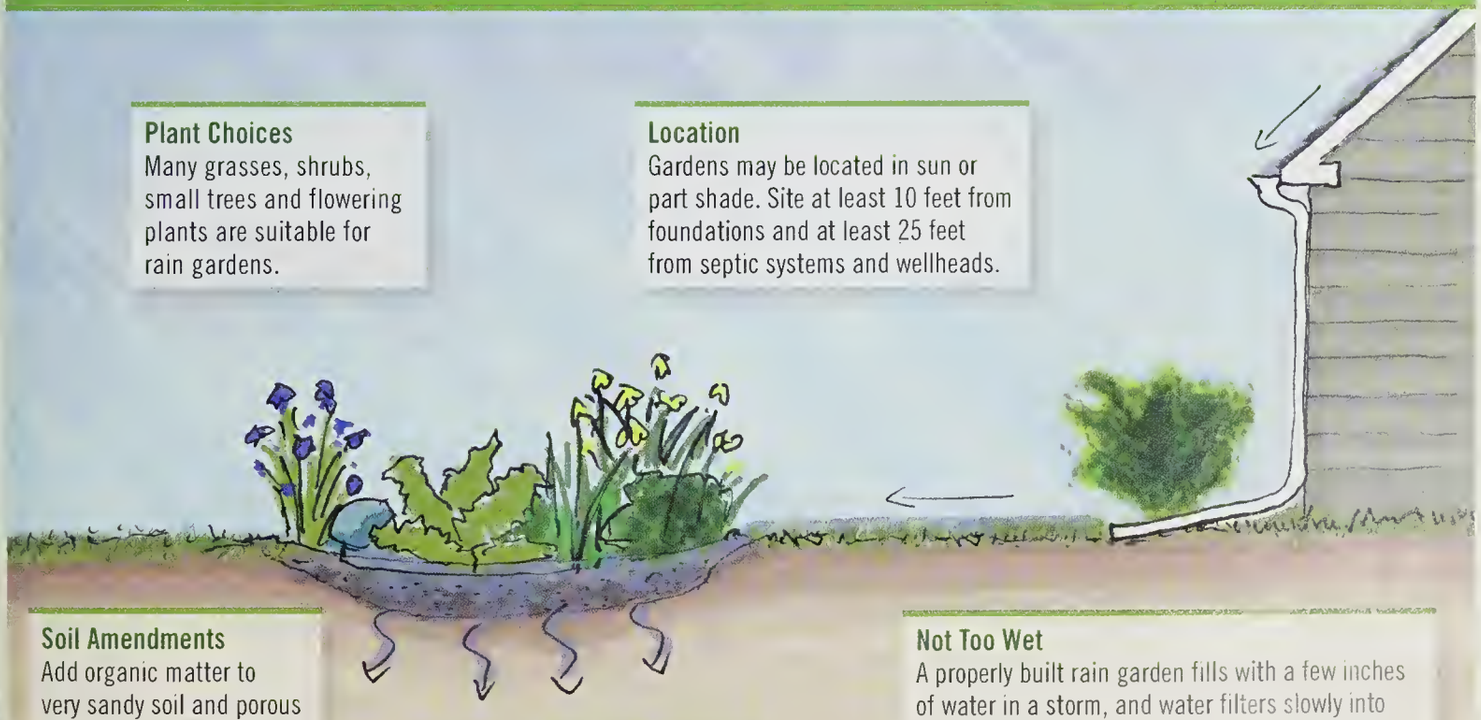
Plant Choices
Many grasses, shrubs, small trees and flowering plants are suitable for rain gardens.
Location
Gardens may be located in sun or part shade. Site at least 10 feet from foundations and at least 25 feet from septic systems and wellheads.
Soil Amendments
Add organic matter to very sandy soil and porous material to clay soil. A good mix is 50–60 percent sand, 20–30 percent topsoil and 20–30 percent compost.
Depth
Most gardens need be only 3–6 inches deep.
Not Too Wet
A properly built rain garden fills with a few inches of water in a storm, and water filters slowly into the ground. Water should not stand longer than 24 hours. Don't construct where seasonal high water table is within 24 inches of the soil surface.

Illustration by Warren Kessler

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10 Ways
To Be Green In Your Yard

By John Bruce

The National Gardening Association (NGA) finds that nine in 10 Americans believe it's important to maintain their landscapes in a way that benefits the environment.

To measure how "green" homeowners are in caring for their lawns and landscapes at home, NGA asked respondents with a yard or garden which environmentally friendly lawn, garden and landscape practices they follow. The result? Most homeowners follow only a sixth of the environmentally friendly lawn, garden and landscape practices recommended by the NGA.

While most homeowners answered that they water their lawn and plants only when needed and keep yards well maintained to add beauty, only about half say they follow pesticide and fertilizer labels carefully.

Similarly, fewer than half surveyed said they apply mulches; go to the trouble of choosing the right plants for their climate, sun/shade, soil and rainfall; or cut their lawns at the highest recommended mower setting.

Here are 10 ways you can be environmentally friendly when caring for your lawns and gardens:

1 FEED REGULARLY. Maintaining a healthy lawn involves regular feedings. A healthy lawn is able to absorb and use water more efficiently and recover from drought quickly once water becomes available.

2 WATER WISELY. Pumping water requires power. Rely instead on rainfall for watering lawns and gardens as much as possible. Before watering, watch for signs of lack of water such as dry soil or wilting. For your lawn, the time between needed irrigation is up to 20 days for heavy, clay soils and about 5 days for light, sandy soils.

3 MOW HIGH. Set your mower to its highest appropriate setting. Longer grass blades promote deeper roots that help retain moisture. Mow St. Augustine and buffalo grass at three inches, one inch for Bermuda grass and two inches for centipede and Zoysia grass.

4 LEAVE GRASS CLIPPINGS ON THE LAWN. Recycled grass clippings return organic matter and nutrients to the soil. It saves clean-up time and improves soil quality.

5 KEEP FERTILIZER ON THE LAWN. Sweep fertilizer and grass clippings off driveways, sidewalks and curbs and back onto your lawn. Making this a habit protects rivers, lakes and streams while keeping nutrients where the belong—on the lawn.

6 CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS. Pick easy-to-grow plants and lawn types that are well adapted or native to your region. Avoid plants with known pest problems.

7 BE GREEN IN YOUR YARD. Use a push mower, which, unlike a gas or electric mower, consumes no fossil fuels and emits no greenhouse gases.

8 COMPOST YOUR FOOD AND YARD WASTE. Doing so reduces the amount of garbage sent to landfills and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. For tips, visit the Environmental Protection Agency's GreenScapes Web site at www.epa.gov/greenscapes.

9 APPLY MULCH TO YOUR YARD AND GARDEN. Use mulch to help moderate soil temperature and retain moisture during dry weather, reducing the need for watering. Learn all about mulch, plus free sources of mulch, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture at www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/mulching.html.

10 PLAN YOUR LANDSCAPE WISELY. Choose plants that are low-maintenance and require less water and fewer pesticides.

John Bruce is an editor, writer and gardener.

Photos provided by The Scotts Company

Community Gardening

Grows as a remedy for tough times

If you and your neighbors are looking for ways to help dig out of the recession by lowering your food bills, then history offers a valuable lesson: Look to the earth beneath your feet.

During World War I, community vegetable gardens emerged as a cooperative solution to help the U.S. war effort. These so-called "victory gardens" took root in rural areas, cities and towns. Garden patches were planted in yards, railroad rights of way, city parks and other public lands.

The victory-garden trend resumed full force in World War II. The U.S. Department Agriculture informed the public that if they wanted fresh fruits or vegetables in their kitchens, they should plant victory gardens. Almost instantly, Americans were growing vegetable gardens. By some accounts, victory gardens then produced 40 percent of the nation's produce.

These days, many point to the economic downturn, a desire to reduce one's carbon footprint and protect the environment, concerns over food safety and cravings for better-tasting food as the motivations driving folks to work the earth themselves.

Vegetable seed sales grew by double-digits from 2008 to 2009, the nation's major seed companies reported. The number of homes growing vegetables was forecast to climb more than 40 percent compared with just two years earlier, according to the National Gardening Association, a nonprofit organization for gardening education.

Community gardens encourage social interaction and self-reliance. They beautify neighborhoods, produce nutritious food, reduce family budgets, conserve resources and offer opportunities for recreation, exercise, therapy and education.

Acts of leadership have helped spur a national revival of community gardening. Soon after her spouse's inauguration, First Lady Michelle Obama planted the first garden at the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt's victory garden during World War II. Her deed sparked a new wave of interest and earned a commendation of the American Public Gardening Association (www.publicgardens.org).

Earlier in the year, ScottsMiracle-Gro, along with partners including the Garden Writers Association, challenged those who garden to plant an extra row and donate their surplus to local food agencies to feed the hungry. The program—GroGood—also encourages non-gardeners to start a vegetable garden for food independence while helping those in need in their local communities.

So, just how do you go about actually beginning a community garden?

The American Community Gardening Association provides resources on its Web site, www.communitygarden.org. Click on "Starting a community garden," and you'll find an entire step-by-step guide.

The National Garden Bureau recommends wise planning in taking full advantage of a community garden area. For instance, the NGA suggests that wide beds—about 3 feet across—are better than rows because you cut down on the number of paths needed, especially important in small gardens. For more, visit www.ngb.org.

Photos provided by The Scotts Company.

NORTH CAROLINA RESOURCES

North Carolina State University's Web site offers multiple resources for community gardens. The site provides a list of existing community gardens, organized by county. Listings often include contact names, phone numbers, email addresses and even Web sites. There's also a helpful, free how-to guide you can download as a pdf that includes North Carolina resources. Visit http://nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu

The Right Tools

Help You Master Your Garden

by John Bruce

There are so many different types of gardening tools available. How do you know which ones you'll really need?

For starters, you'll need something to dig with—shovel or a spade. A shovel is typically a scoop for mixing or moving material from one place to another. A spade is designed for digging. The blade is straighter than a shovel's and is made to be pushed into the soil.

Long-handle tools usually offer better leverage and reach and allow working from a standing position. The handle may be either straight or have a D-shaped grip. With some long-handle pruners, extensions may be available.

Short-handle tools are lighter, usually less expensive and more compact to store. They let you work in confined spaces or while kneeling. Common short-handled tools include hand pruners and clippers, hoes, garden trowels and cultivators.

Using short-handle tools means spending time low to the ground. A good, firm foam pad or strap-on kneepads can help prevent aches and pains. Choices range from simple pads to foldable seats.

BASIC AND NOT-SO-BASIC TOOLS

- **Garden knives.** Useful for cutting twine and plant ties and opening bags and plant root balls, the safer ones have non-collapsible fixed blades.
- **Garden rakes.** A heavy rake with short, stiff tines supported by a flat or bow-shaped metal frame is useful for raking heavy materials, removing rocks and other debris and smoothing the soil for planting.
- **Leaf rakes.** A light rake with long, thin, flexible tines designed to gather leaves or other light materials.
- **Hand pruners and shears.** Used for removing flowers, lightweight foliage and small branches.
- **Hoes.** For weeding and scraping the soil's surface, hoes include the traditional flat scraping or chopping types and the loop, scuffle and stirrup styles.
- **Long-handled pruners and loppers.** These long-handled versions of hand pruners provide greater reach and leverage, allowing for larger items to be cut.
- **Mattocks.** A heavy, flat-bladed tool designed to dig or grub in the soil on one end, with a sharp point to break up heavy or rocky soils on the other.
- **Spading forks.** Used to open up the ground, dig bulbs, incorporate soil amendments and turn compost, they have heavy, flat tines and often a D-shaped handle.
- **Tillers.** A power tool that breaks up large areas of compacted soil and incorporates soil amendments.
- **Cultivators.** A tool with heavy curved or bent tines or sometimes multiple spinning blades designed to open up and aerate the soil. Styles with tines are also used to mix materials and effectively loosen weed roots.

NEWER TOOLS

- **The Weed Wrench** (weedwrench.com), a manually-operated, all-steel tool designed to remove woody weeds by uprooting them.

- **The Easy Bloom Plant Sensor** (easybloom.com) shows which vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, trees, shrubs or houseplants will grow where, indoors or out.

STORING YOUR TOOLS

Avoid clutter and damage by keeping your tools organized and dry. There's a tremendous selection in stores and online of storage racks, systems, tool organizers, outdoor closets and sheds. A basic, simple storage idea is to use a bucket caddy with cloth pockets that wraps around a 5-gallon bucket. It's convenient for storing small tools and you can dump weeds in the bucket. Another idea for keeping small tools, seeds, sunscreen and other items handy is to mount a jumbo mailbox on a post near the garden.

John Bruce is an editor, writer and gardener.

Teach Your Children

How To Garden (and watch them bloom)

By John Bruce

Typically, people are introduced to gardening by their parents or grandparents. The best thing that a gardener can do is to mentor and teach a kid the benefits of gardening. A little patience and imagination go a long way toward instilling a lifelong interest in gardening in children. Kids usually love it, and it helps them become responsible.

It helps to have a short handled shovel, rake, trowel, a small watering can and a small wheelbarrow. Keep a camera close by to help in the process of creating long-lasting memories.

Keeping the garden fun is a must. To avoid frustration, give a child his or her own garden plot. It's a good idea to start out small. You can create a child's garden plot by building a 4-foot-by-4-foot or 3-foot-by-6-foot raised bed enclosed by timbers in a sunny spot near a source of water. Invest in some seasoned manure or compost if you don't have any on hand.

A simple alternative is to garden in pots and containers anywhere there's sun. But remember, containers dry out much more quickly than garden plots so container plants are dependent on regular, daily care.

Recommended vegetables for young gardeners include beans, sunflowers, radishes and cherry tomatoes. Start plants from seed indoors using recyclable containers like egg cartons, and watch as the child becomes fascinated by the growth. If you want faster results, buy garden vegetable and flower seedlings to plant.

You can spice up your child's adventure by planting veggies of unusual colors or sizes. Try Purple Queen, a bush bean that doesn't require support. The Easter Egg radish matures in a rainbow of red, purple and white in 30 days. Mammoth sunflowers grow up to 12 feet tall with huge flowers and edible seeds.

The Scott Company

One idea is to create a visible imagination station for your child. Planting four tall-growing sunflowers in the corners of a 4-foot square. Plant morning glory seeds around each sunflower when they're about a foot tall. Let the vines climb the stalks. When the sunflowers reach about 5 or 6 feet, tie a "net" of strings between them on three sides and across the top. Tend the vines so they grow on the strings and create the walls of a room.

Let your child select what seeds or seedling to plant, and help the child keep a journal on growth. Record-keeping and organization are also important lessons to learn.

BOOKS & WEB SITES

"Gardening with Children" by Monika Hanneman, Patricia Hulse, Brian Johnson, Barbara Kurland and Tracey Patterson and illustrated by Sam Tomasello, published in 2007 by Brooklyn Botanic Garden, helps parents, teachers and community gardeners introduce gardening to kids.

"A Child's Garden: 60 Ideas to Make Any Garden Come Alive for Children" by Molly Dannenmaier and published in 2008 by Archetype Press Books is a guide for parents wishing to create natural spaces in the garden where children can play and explore.

The National Gardening Association offers programs, courses, grants and other resources for schools and parents on www.kidsgardening.com.

Renee's Garden supports children's gardening programs through the National Gardening Association. Renee's donates leftover and returned seeds to encourage school garden projects all over the country, www.reneesgarden.com.

John Bruce is an editor, writer and gardener.

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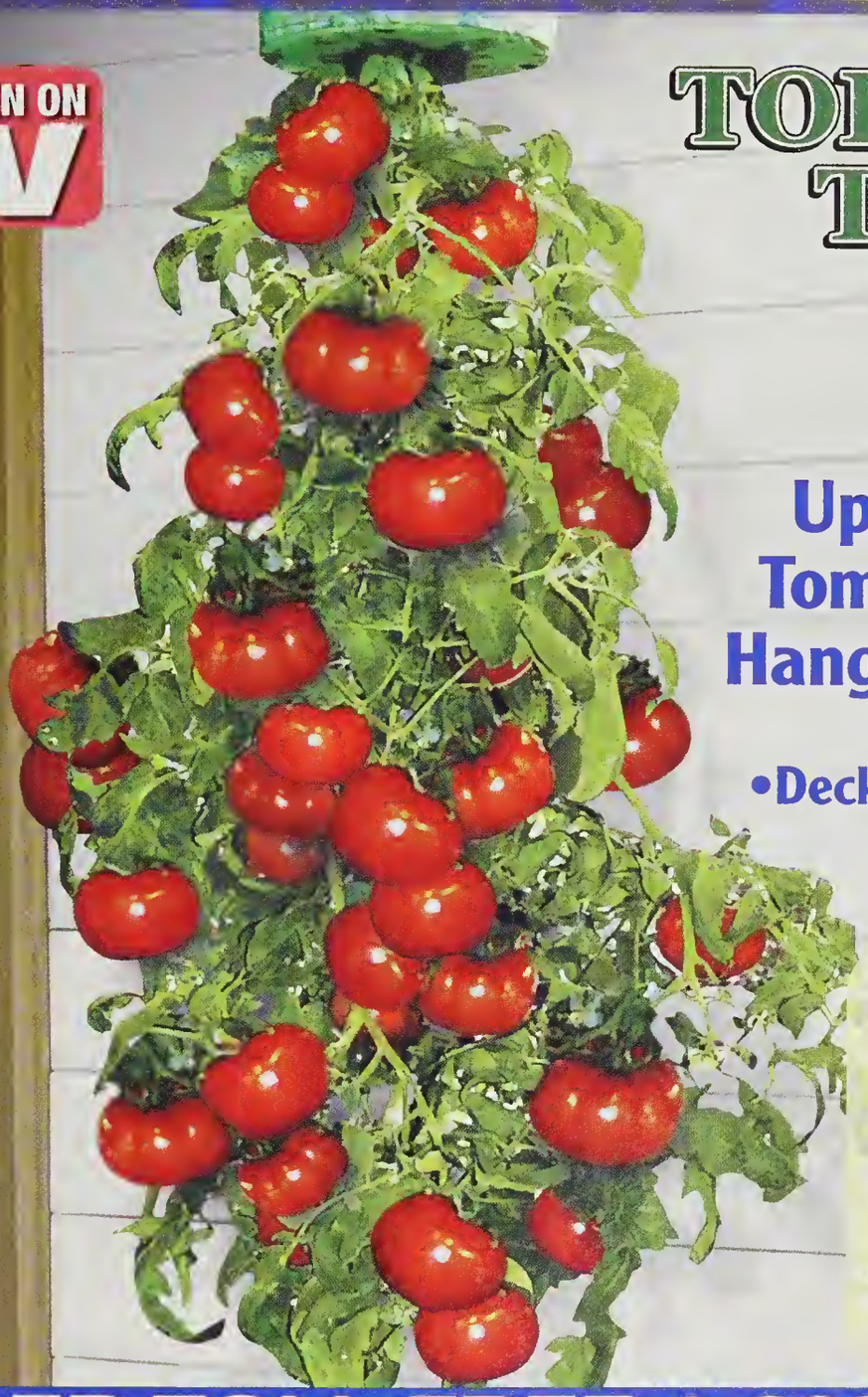

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JACOB'S LOG:
Expect the unexpected

By Jacob Brooks

Never jump off of a ladder into a pile of leaves and expect a soft landing. Chances are you will break your arm. You'll go to the hospital and get stuck with a bright pink cast, and the other fourth graders will make fun of you almost every day.

Never put a flame next to a hay bale and expect it not to burn. It will. Your grandma will freak out. Your brother will laugh. You will singe your arm hair and set your father's hay field on fire. You'll hear your dad use some colorful language.

These were not the experiences I had on the Washington Youth Tour last June, but they are experiences that teach a common lesson, one that was reinforced on my trip to Washington. That lesson is: Expect the unexpected.

I rode that chartered bus headed to Washington D.C. with over 40 people that I hardly knew. I had no idea what was going to happen. I assumed it would be just a long, boring trip. I thought that when it was all over, saying good-bye was going to be easy. I should have known to expect the unexpected.

As it turned out, it was on that trip that I made great friends, shared great laughs and learned valuable lessons. At the National Archives, I remember distinctly staring down at the words of the Declaration of Independence thinking, "Wow! This is it! Right before me is the essence of our forefathers' handiwork—the very foundation that gave birth to this great nation." In that moment, I realized the capability that all of we Americans carry within us: the capability to believe, to take a stand, and most importantly to change the world.

When I read the words of that historic document, I felt a sense of pride, but more importantly, a sense of responsibility.

I realized while spending the week in our nation's capitol that I had been given a great opportunity, but I had honestly not known how to use it. As an American, I possess the freedom of speech. I am given the opportunity, privilege and right to let my voice be heard. It was through the Youth Tour that I was taught the power of not only my voice, but our collective voice.

The most important lesson from the Youth Tour came when I sat sleep-deprived on stage behind the keynote speaker, Mike Schlappi, an Olympic gold medal winner in men's wheelchair basketball. These words of his stuck with me: "I thank God for pain, because only through pain do we change, and only through change do we grow."

I never expected that I would hear something that made such a phenomenal difference in my life. I should have expected the unexpected.

I can remember my first day of high school and how I was faced with change. Through that change I was able to grow from cautious to confident.

I remember how this nation went through pain on the day of September 11, 2001. I remember how that pain gave this nation a desire to change, and I remember how in that time of change we grew strong as patriots and as a nation.

Now, I do expect the unexpected.

Jacob Brooks, a senior at Alleghany High School, was sponsored by Blue Ridge Electric on the 2009 Youth Tour to Washington, He was elected by all delegates there as the national spokesperson for the electric cooperatives' Youth Leadership Council.

Follow Jacob on the Carolina Country page on Facebook.

"Serendipity" moves to a safer place

The "Serendipity" house on its way to a safer lot on Hatteras Island. Photos by Buddy Swain, Hatteras Designs.

An Outer Banks house where actors Richard Gere and Diane Lane played in the 2008 love story movie "Nights in Rodanthe" added another scene to its romantic history on Jan. 18 when it was rolled down the beach to a site intended to protect it from encroaching Atlantic Ocean surf.

Ben and Debbie Huss, Rutherford EMC members who live in Catawba County, watched proudly and anxiously as a World War II-era tractor operated by Expert Movers hauled the 83,000-pound house for 22 minutes some 2,500 feet down Hwy. 12 to a safe landing in Rodanthe village. A businessman and "a romantic at heart," Mr. Huss bought the place in December as a Christmas present for his wife of 36 years. They are opening their six-bedroom "junior castle" to visitors in the rental market.

The Husses also watched their Outer Banks electric cooperative, Cape Hatteras Electric, carefully move power lines to allow the house known as "Serendipity" to pass through safely.

"Serendipity" was built in 1988 by a Dare County family who knew to sink sturdy pilings on concrete footings 14 feet deep into the sand so the house could withstand oceanfront elements. But in recent years, the tide rose closer, the beach front eroded, and the sea and sand washed under the building and onto the highway during storms. Even so, as the first house to arise from the beach after you drive 15 miles south through a wildlife refuge on Hatteras Island, "Serendipity" held a fascination for Outer Banks visitors. "Nights in Rodanthe" producers knew about the mystique, chose the site for its film, delayed filming during an actual nor'easter, then called on the local fire department to create a rainy storm scene.

Chris Deyarmin, Cape Hatteras Electric lineman, keeps an eye on lines the co-op raised to allow the house to pass through.

Expert Movers, who in 1999 successfully transported the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse inland for the same reason, methodically raised the house on cribbing prior to the move but had to wait more than a week in threatening weather until lower tide permitted a safe move.

The work by Cape Hatteras Electric involved raising lines from poles on the west side of the road that send service to houses on the east side, as well the more complicated task of raising an overhead guy wire that bolsters a set of poles.

Moving houses from the tide has occurred on the Outer Banks for generations. The editor of the Island Free Press called this move "a reminder of the fragility of our barrier islands and the way we must adjust to live and visit here."

—Michael E.C. Gery

I Remember...

The Seventies

The best days of my life were growing up the 1970s. It was a time of fast old cars and good classic music. Car shows and pizza restaurants seemed to go together.

The 70s slipped away from me, and I moved to North Carolina from the big city of Baltimore. In the 1980s I went to work in the automotive field. I wanted so hard to bring back the 70s. My brother had two old cars for sale. One was a Cutlass Supreme, the other was a '71 Cutlass Olds with a 350 engine. That's the one I wanted to fix up real nice. So I bought it and started fixing it up. For about five years all I did was work and fix up my car. I had a custom-built car and a real nice jam system.

One day I was riding through town and the 70s slipped away from me again. Someone ran into me and totaled my nice car out. Now all I have is memories of the 70s, but I hope one day I can bring them back.

Jerry Kaifos, Laurel Hill

I spent five years fixing up this Olds.

The Blue Dragon

My husband, Gene Moore (1962–1993), was office manager and accountant for Pitt & Greene Electric in Farmville for 31 years. When our boys were in grade school, we had a blue Chevrolet Nova. It was a unique car. When you started off, it would belch and a cloud of black smoke came out the exhaust. Our boys nicknamed it "The Blue Dragon." I would take them to school, and they would ask me to let them off a block from the school so their friends wouldn't see the belching and black smoke.

Later on, we got a new car. One day, the boys and I were riding down the road and we saw the "The Blue Dragon." A teenager was driving it, and it had been wrecked with a crumpled front end, multiple dents and a cracked windshield. All of a sudden, the boys were very quiet. That car was a part of our family.

Ann Moore, Farmville, Pitt & Greene EMC

I worked at one restaurant 35 years.

Learning to love waiting tables

When I was 9 or 10 years old, my grandma and aunt lived in a log house near me. They cooked a lot of food in their fireplace.

A man owned a farm near them and asked my grandma and aunt to cook lunch for his farm workers. Grandma told him they would be glad to cook for them. My aunt asked me to come and help serve. There were six or seven men who were very hot and tired when they got to the house for lunch. My aunt had set up tables and chairs under a big shade tree where it was cool. It was a lot of fun carrying food to the tables and helping to serve them.

After my husband died and my children were grown, I went to work as a waitress. I developed a love of waitress work when I was helping those farm workers. I worked at one restaurant for 35 years and always enjoyed it. I was 80 years old when I retired and had made a lot of friends. I still keep in touch with some of them and enjoy seeing my previous customers up town or in the community.

Monnie Sullivan, Lillington, South River EMC

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Keranique is Unique..and For Women ONLY

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Hair Loss is Not Created Equal

For years, the discussion of women's hair loss has been taboo. While the market for products dealing with men's hair loss has exploded, women struggling with their own hair loss issues were forced to suffer alone, hiding under wigs, scarves and hats...or worse.

But the number of women suffering has become so large that even the medical community is finally acknowledging this issue and as they are seeing women with hair loss at earlier and earlier ages. The problem can no longer be ignored. That is why the ***International Hair Institute*** was created. While balding in men is accepted as almost a genetic predisposition coupled with age, in women, the leading causes of hair loss are varied. This epidemic is so vast it has been reported that 50% of all women over 50 are dealing with some form of hair loss or thinning hair!

In clinical trials, women experienced 2.7 times the hair growth using the FDA-approved ingredient in Keranique

Visibly restores fullness, texture and body

Many women have tried popular hair loss treatments designed for men which contain 5% minoxidil. But such a high percentage concentration can cause serious side effects and is NOT recommended for use by women by the FDA. Keranique is designed to work with a women's natural body chemistry to help restore the scalp, build back the richness and fullness in hair, while reversing hair loss and re-growing hair. Women all over the U.S. who have tried Kernanique love the way it leaves their hair silky smooth and the amazing results.

What Our Customers Have To Say About Keranique...

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Results not typical — *Jodi, MO*

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Age: 50% of women experience hair loss by 50.

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Genetics: Family history may cause hair loss.

Stress: Can lead to hormonal imbalances.

Scalp: Poor care can accelerate hair loss.

Diet: Lack of protein, iron can impede growth.

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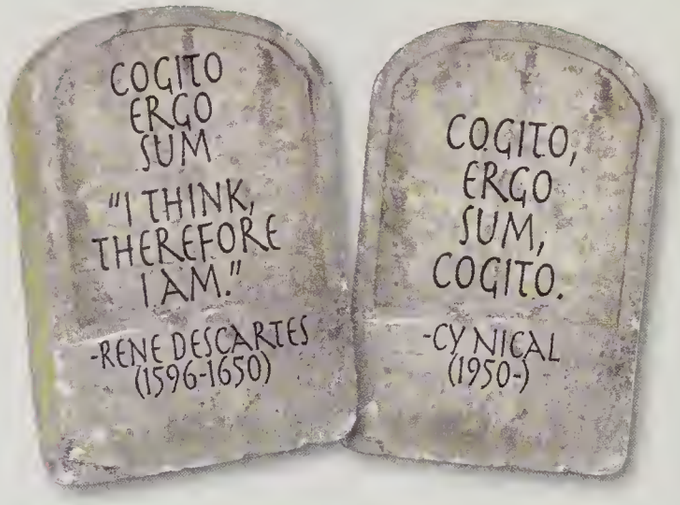

Find the Value of

S O L V E T H I S O N E

_ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ = _

Each of the nine different letters in SOLVE THIS ONE has a different value from 1 through 9. Given the total value of the letters in each of the words below, can you find the value of each letter and the total value of SOLVE THIS ONE?

SLEEVE (35)	THESE (26)	LOST (26)
THOSE (25)	LOSE (25)	NOSE (21)
VEST (20)	SHE (11)	HIS (8)

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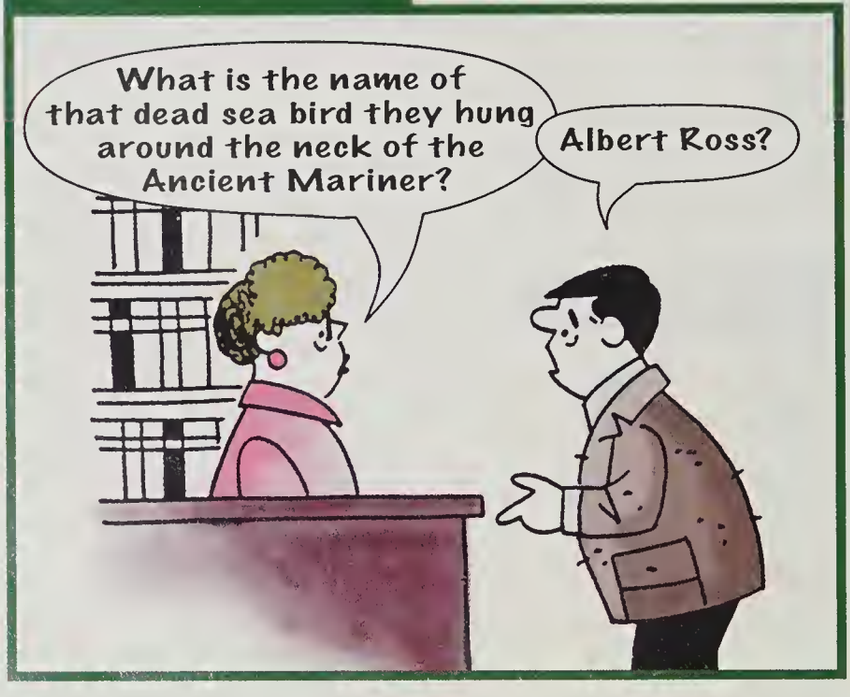
Miss Fitts



For answers, please see page 29

UNSCRAMBL'IT

And so they were harried

After Adam ate the apple he T_____
lebasn

____ _ ___ ____.
misb u ast rsuc

Use the capital letters in the code clue below to fill in the blanks above.

"ADEFLNORTUVW" means unscrambleit

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and diggers delve deep underground
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–cgj

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By James Dulley

Prudent landscaping can help cut your home energy costs

James Dulley

Low-water-usage ground cover plants and boulders at my house are shaded by trees during the summer and help warm the home during winter.

People tend to appreciate landscaping for its aesthetic value, but proper landscaping also impacts your home's energy efficiency. From an environmental standpoint, good landscape design also minimizes the need for mowing and other lawn care. This not only saves you time, but you may be able to get by with a push mower or a battery-operated mower to eliminate gasoline costs.

In addition, wise landscaping can reduce the need for watering.

Proper landscaping includes the use of ground cover, dwarf and full-size shrubs, climbing vines, and trees. Ground cover is typically some type of plant, grass or gravel. The selection you make depends on your climate and specific house.

In general, try to use low-growing ground cover plants or gravel instead of grass. Other than some unique types of grass, most common species of grass require maintenance. Grass is still the best choice where children play or pets roam, but try to keep it to a minimum.

In all but the most humid climates, placing low-growing ground cover plants near your house helps keep it cool during summer. The leaves block the sun's heat from being absorbed into the ground, and they give off moisture. This evaporation of water from the leaves, called transpiration, cools air near the home—similar to when we perspire.

In hot, humid climates, gravel that is shaded from the sun can be more effective than ground cover plants. Using gravel also eliminates the need for watering, but it may increase the air temperature around your house. The thermal mass of the gravel stores the afternoon sun's heat, causing the heating effect to last into the evening. Though not helpful during summer, during winter gravel provides an advantage.

Dwarf shrubs are ideal for energy-efficient landscaping because they remain small at maturity (2 to 3 feet high). Plant some near the house foundation and some further away for windbreak ramps. Since they stay small, they require little watering or care.

In addition, dwarf shrubs can cut your utility bills year-round. The sill plate, the bottom frame along a home's foundation, remains one of the greatest air infiltration pathways into many houses. Planting dwarf shrubs, especially evergreen varieties, near the house can block the force of cold winter winds and reduce air leaking in.

As a windbreak ramp, dwarf shrubs can be planted to the northwest side of taller shrubs and trees. These smaller plants begin directing the cold winds upward toward the tops of taller trees. The upward wind path continues over the top of your house, not against it.

Climbing vines are often more effective than trees for shade because you can target specific windows and areas of your house where heat produces the greatest problem. Deciduous vines that lose their leaves during winter are best so the winter sun still reaches the house. In most climates, locate the trellis close to the house to also take advantage of transpiration cooling. In humid climates, locate the trellis a little further away from the house's wall. This allows the air flow to carry the moisture away, but still provides good shading.

Trees have perhaps the greatest impact upon your utility bills. Evergreen trees are effective for the northwest across to the northeast side of a house to block the winter winds. During winter, the sun does not shine from those sides. Deciduous trees planted on the other sides provide summer shade, but allow the winter sun through. You may want to leave a small gap to the southwest to allow summer breezes to reach your home.

James Dulley is an engineer and syndicated columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Have a question for Jim?
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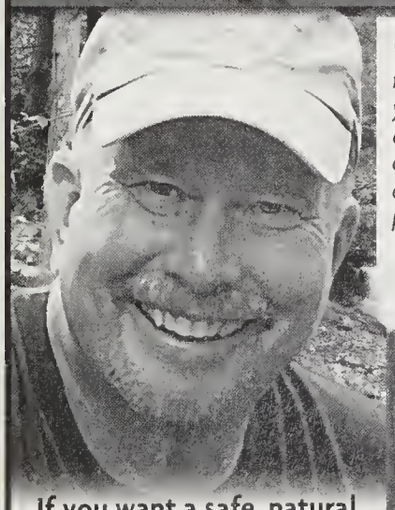

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March Events

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ONGOING

Arts Councils' Fourth Friday
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.theartscouncil.org

African-American Art Exhibit
Through March 6, Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.visitfayettevillenc.com

Joyce Scott: Recall
Mixed media artist
Through March 20, Charlotte
(704) 332-5535
www.mccollcenter.org

Priceless Pieces Quilt Show
Through March 29, Manteo
(252) 475-1500
www.roanokeisland.com

Youth Sledding Hill
Through March, Beech Mountain
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"One Life Expressions"
Jose Laguna, acrylic abstract artist
Through March 6, Wake Forest
(919) 570-0765
www.sunflowerstudiowf.com

First Lady & President Polk Exhibition
Through June 11, Grover
(704) 937-2940
www.theinnofthepatriots.com

From Lights to Flight: Coast Guard Art
Through October 18
Elizabeth City
(252) 335-1453
www.museumofthealbemarle.com

Tell Me A Story
Famous dolls from children's literature
Through June 30, High Point
(336) 885-3655
www.dollandminiaturemuseum.org

Celebrating American Roots Music
March 13–April 24
Museum of Regional History
Mount Airy
(336) 786-4478
www.northcarolinamuseum.org

1 | MON.

Art Right Now
March 1–7, Lumberton
(910) 739-9999
www.robesonarts.org

2 | TUE

Eastern Regional Basketball Tournament
March 2–7, Minges Colesium, ECU
Greenville
(252) 328-6212
www.ecu.edu

Stamper's 101
Homemade papercrafts
Tarboro
(252) 641-0857
www.cardscraps.com

6 | SAT.

The Kenny & Amanda Smith Band
Troy
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www.myspace.com/eleazermusicbarn

Rumba on the Lumber
5k run, chili cookoff
Lumberton
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www.robesonroadrunners.com

Coastal Cohorts Concert
Raleigh
(252) 393-8185
www.nccoast.org

Sharpe Store Music Gospel Jam
Bear Creek
(919) 542-8401
www.sharpestoremusic.org

Great Outdoor Expo
March 6–7, Morganton
(828) 439-1866
www.ci.morganton.nc.us

Homebuilders' Expo
March 6–7, Greenville
(252) 756-7915

7 | SUN.

Battleship 101
Volunteers discuss shipboard life
Wilmington
(910) 251-5797
www.battleshipnc.com

9 | TUE.

"Church Basement Ladies"
Musical comedy
Spindale
(828) 286-3636
www.foundationshows.org

12 | FRI

Monster Truck Spectacular
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.atthecrown.com

"Jesus Christ Superstar"
Musical
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.atthecrown.com

13 | SAT.

Highfalls Fiddlers' Convention
Robbins
(910) 464-3600
http://tinyurl.com/ya4qslw

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18 | THURS.

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19 | FRI.

Danielle Miraglia Concert
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New Bern
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www.downeastfolkarts.org

20 | SAT.

Coffee House Talent Night
West Jefferson
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www.ashecountyarts.org

Empty Bowls Fundraiser
Share a meal; live entertainment
Brasstown
(828) 837-2775
www.folkschool.org

Blacksmithing Demonstration
March 20–21, High Point
(336) 883-3022
www.highpointmuseum.org

Wildlife Expo
March 20–21, Wilmington
(910) 795-0292
www.capefearwildlifeexpo.com

Dragon Boat Paddle Clinic
March 20–21, Lake Lure
(828) 245-1492

21 | SUN.

Wine & Stein Festival
Greenville
(252) 329-4200

23 | TUE

"The Wizard of Oz"
Musical
March 23–24, Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.atthecrown.com

27 | SAT.

The Coastal Cohorts Concert
Roanoke Island
(252) 475-1500
www.nccoast.org

Walk to Defeat ALS
Greenville
(252) 752-8854
www.catfishchapter.org

Ronnie Milsap Concert
Spindale
(828) 245-1492
www.foundationshows.org

Dale Earnhardt Charity Ride Auction
Charlotte
(704) 587-9050
www.intimidator.carowinds.com

Righteous Brother Bill Medley Concert
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.atthecrown.com

KidsFest 2010
Greenville
(252) 329-4200

Natural Egg Dyeing
March 27–28, High Point
(336) 883-3022
www.highpointmuseum.org

30 | TUE.

"Route 66"
Comedy musical revue
West Jefferson
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CAROLINA COUNTRY adventures

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When folks visit here, their eyes shine and their hearts pound with excitement. Is it the varied shopping? The tasty food? Definitely yes for some, but what really seems to rev folks up is the racing. The area is super-charged with what promoters say is the world's greatest concentration of motorsports attractions. Cabarrus' rich history includes the discovery of gold by a 12-year-old boy in 1799, which itself led to a kind of race. Reed Gold Mine is in Midland, and offers engaging exhibits and guided tours of restored tunnels. Later and equally fatefully, in 1887 a merchant named James W. Cannon opened his first textile plant. His success led to his construction of a "model mill town" he named Kannapolis. Cannon Mills was once the world's largest manufacturer of towels and sheets. Kannapolis textile plants closed their doors in 2003 but left behind fine churches, good schools and an active foundation. The lovely "Williamsburg style" seen in downtown Kannapolis is a legacy from Ruth Coltrane Cannon. Now, Kannapolis is evolving into an information hub with its celebrated North Carolina Research Campus, a large biotechnology center built where mill buildings once stood. Across the street is Forty Six, a fun eatery named for the number of chromosomes in the human body. Another destination eatery in Kannapolis is Junction Café & Grill, which makes the late racing legend Dale Earnhardt's tomato sandwich the way his mom made it. The café is listed as a pit stop on The Dale Trail, a self-guided racing history tour around Kannapolis (www.daletrail.com). In little Mount Pleasant, there's the Eastern Cabarrus Historical Museum. In Concord, the county's largest city at just under 80,000 residents, shopping opportunities abound, from giant Concord Mills to alluring shops downtown.

Three top spots:

Motorsports: Lowe's Motor Speedway in Concord (also called Charlotte Motor Speedway) offers a speedway, the relatively new zMax Dragway and a dirt track. (800) 455-3267 (FANS) or www.charlottemotorspeedway.com. There's also Concord Speedway, (704) 782-4221 or www.concordmotorsportpark.com.

Fieldcrest Cannon Textile Museum: Located in the Kannapolis mill village, the museum celebrates the textile industry through a self-guided, interactive tour. Highlights include an antique hand loom, sample of textiles more than 1,200 years old and an interactive computer monitor that details manufacturing processes.

Concord Mills: This mega-mall is touted as the state's number one tourist attraction. Located off I-85 in Concord, it features more than 200 stores, an oval racetrack layout and a NASCAR-themed fun park. (704) 979-3000 or www.simon.com.

Fans and competitors enjoy "tearing it up" at Lowe's Motor Speedway and Concord Speedway.

Learn of other nearby adventures and events:

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Baked Chimichangas

- 2½ cups shredded cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ¾ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- 6 flour tortillas (10 inches), warmed
- ¾ cup shredded reduced fat cheddar cheese
- 1 cup reduced sodium chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup fat free half and half
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies

In a nonstick skillet, simmer the chicken, salsa, onion, cumin and oregano until heated through and most of the liquid has evaporated.

Place ½ cup chicken mixture down the center of each tortilla; top with 2 tablespoons cheese. Fold sides and ends over filling and roll up.

Place seam side down in a 13-by-9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake, uncovered, at 425 degrees for 15 minutes or until lightly browned.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the broth, bouillon and pepper. Cook until bouillon is dissolved. In a small bowl, combine flour and cream until smooth; gradually stir into broth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in chilies; cook until heated through. To serve, cut chimichangas in half; top with sauce.

Yield: 6 servings

Toasted Reubens

- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 3 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
- 4 teaspoons prepared mustard
- 8 slices rye bread
- 1 pound thinly sliced deli corned beef
- 4 slices Swiss cheese
- 1 can (8 ounces) sauerkraut, rinsed and well drained
- 2 tablespoons butter

In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, ketchup, pickle relish and horseradish; set aside. Spread mustard on one side of four slices of bread, then layer with corned beef, cheese, sauerkraut and mayonnaise mixture; top with remaining bread.

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add sandwiches; cover and toast on both sides until bread is lightly browned and cheese is melted.

Yield: 4 servings

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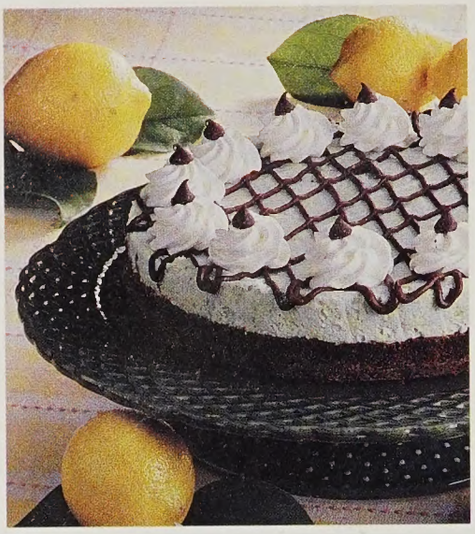

Mint Brownie Pie

- 6 tablespoons butter
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup all-purpose flour

Filling

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon peppermint extract
- Green food coloring, optional
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- ¼ cup semisweet chocolate chips, melted
- Additional whipped topping and chocolate chips, optional

In a large saucepan, melt butter and chocolate. Stir in sugar until smooth. Add eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour until well blended.

Pour into a greased 9-inch springform pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 18–20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in extract and food coloring if desired. Fold in whipped topping. Spread evenly over brownie layer. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Remove sides of pan just before serving. Melt chocolate chips; drizzle over the top. Garnish with whipped topping and additional chocolate chips if desired.

Yield: 8 servings

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Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale, WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web site at www.tasteofhome.com.

Cheddar Chicken Spaghetti

- 1 package (7 ounces) spaghetti, broken
- 2 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 can (10¾ ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon diced pimientos, optional
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Cook spaghetti according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine the chicken, 1 cup cheese, soup, milk, pimientos if desired, salt and pepper. Drain spaghetti; add to the chicken mixture and toss to coat.

Transfer to a greased 13-by-9-inch baking dish. Sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 20–25 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6–8 servings

From Your Kitchen

Neiman Marcus Bars

- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 stick margarine, melted
- 1 egg
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1 box (16-ounce) powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir together cake mix, margarine, 1 egg and nuts, then press into a 9-by-13-inch pan. Cream together cream cheese, 2 eggs, powdered sugar and vanilla, then pour over cake mixture. Bake for 40 minutes. Cool thoroughly (refrigerate) before slicing into bars.

Althea Hofstetter of New Bern, a member of Tideland EMC, will receive $25 for submitting this recipe.

Send Us Your Recipes

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Chocolate Cookie Cupcakes

- 1 package (18¼ ounces) white cake mix
- 1¼ cups water
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 3 egg whites
- 1 cup coarsely crushed cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies (about 9 cookies)
- 1 can (16 ounces) vanilla frosting
- Additional crushed cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookie

In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, water, oil and egg whites; beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on high for 2 minutes. Gently fold in cookie crumbs. Fill paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full.

Bake at 350° for 18–22 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Frost cupcakes; sprinkle with additional cookie crumbs.

Yield: 2 dozen

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tal Home Advantage offer requires 24-month commitment and credit qualification. If service is terminated before the end of commitment, a cancellation fee of $17.50/month remaining will apply. Programming credits will apply during the first 12 nths. All equipment is leased and must be returned to DISH Network® upon cancellation or unreturned equipment fees apply. Limit 6 leased tuners per account; lease upgrade fees will apply for select receivers; monthly fees may apply based on type number of receivers. HD programming requires HD television. All prices, packages and programming subject to change without notice. Local channels only available in certain areas. Offer is subject to the terms of applicable Promotional and Residential omer Agreements. Additional restrictions and fees may apply. First-time DISH Network® customers only. Offer ends 5/31/10. HBO/Showtime: Programming credits will apply during the first 3 months. Customer must downgrade or then-current price will y. HBO® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. SHOWTIME and related marks are trademarks of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS company. InfinityDISH charges a one-time $49.95 non-refundable processing fee ed "Best HD-DVR Available" by cnet Editors' Choice, February 2008.

ATTENTION!
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS!

Here's a plan that can provide
CASH TO HELP WITH FINAL EXPENSES

Up to $35,000!*

* Selected maximums apply depending on age

Now you can have a life insurance plan to help cover your final expenses – a plan which pays up to $35,000 to help your family cover your last expenses – worldwide.

- Protection up to $35,000
- Benefits begin first day
- Eligible up to age 85
- No physical exam required, based on coverage
- No waiting period
- Proceeds immediately available at death of insured
- Company cannot cancel your plan, reduce your benefits or raise your premium
- Can cost only pennies a day
- Whole Life Insurance Policy 4-790(92) Underwritten by Standard Life and Casualty Insurance Co

MOST HEALTH CONDITIONS ACCEPTED!

Not affiliated with or endorsed by any government agency

Sample Monthly Rates per 1,000*

Issue Age	Male (non-tobacco)	Female (non-tobacco)
5	$ .55	$ .55
15	$ .59	$ .55
35	$ 1.30	$ 1.08
55	$ 3.20	$ 2.53
65	$ 5.36	$ 4.14
75	$10.23	$ 7.64
85	$19.77	$16.52

* Does not include $36 policy fee, minimums may apply

Sample Monthly Rates per 1,000*

Issue Age	Male (tobacco)	Female (tobacco)
5	N/A	N/A
15	N/A	N/A
35	$ 1.79	$ 1.49
55	$ 4.30	$ 3.55
65	$ 7.18	$ 5.41
75	$13.24	$ 8.85
85	$26.26	$17.67

* Does not include $36 policy fee, minimums may apply

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3700 Forest Drive Suite 205
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Yes, I would like to know more about peace of mind!

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MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY TO RECEIVE FULL DETAILS WITHOUT OBLIGATION

CC 03/10